

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

ROBERT G. LOPEZ, an individual,

Plaintiff,

v.

SHIRTS WITHOUT BUTTONS, LLC
and MICHA WEINBLATT

Defendants.

16 CV

Civil Action No.

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

FILED
U.S. DISTRICT COURT
S.D. OF N.Y.
2016 JUN 13 11 11 AM
4399

**COMPLAINT FOR TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT,
UNFAIR COMPETITION AND RELATED CLAIMS**

Plaintiff, Robert G. Lopez, alleges his complaint against Defendants, Shirts Without Buttons, LLC, and Micha Weinblatt as follows:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

1. This action arises from Defendants' infringement of Plaintiff's "ownership" and exclusive "use" rights in the marks LES NYC® and LOWER EAST SIDE™, in conjunction with clothing and other related goods. Despite Plaintiff being the registered owner of the trademark LES NYC® and LOWER EAST SIDE™ and offering various clothing items under such brand names, the Defendants' have infringed Plaintiff's rights in the aforementioned marks by selling, and offering for sale clothing items under Plaintiff's trademark. Plaintiff has already experienced "actual confusion" in connection with this matter and is likely to continue to experience confusion as to the affiliation or connection between the Defendant and Plaintiff resulting in the unjust enrichment of Defendant by using Plaintiff's registered trademarks.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1051 *et seq.*, 15 U.S.C. Sections 1114-1116; under Section 43(a) of the Trademark Act, 15 U.S.C. §1125(a) and Section 43(c) of the Trademark Act, 15 U.S.C. §1125(c).

3. This Court has personal jurisdiction over the Defendants' because Defendants' engage in business activities in, and directed to the State of New York within this judicial district and mail and ship clothing items from its printing and clothing business to locations in New York County (See **Exhibit A**) and because Defendants' have committed tortuous acts aimed at and causing harm within the State of New York and this judicial district.

4. Venue is proper in this judicial district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1391(b) and (c) because it is where Plaintiff resides and the Defendants transact business in this district, and because a substantial portion of the events giving rise to the asserted claims have occurred, and continue to occur, within this district. Furthermore, the damage to Plaintiff and its intellectual property described herein continues to occur in this judicial district.

THE PARTIES

5. Plaintiff, Robert G. Lopez is an individual residing at 230 Clinton Street, Apt. #11C, New York, NY 10002.

6. Upon information and belief, Defendant Shirts Without Buttons, LLC, is a Maryland Limited Liability Company with a principal place of business at 8574 Brickyard Road, Potomac, Maryland 20854.

7. Upon information and belief, Defendant Micha Weinblatt is the owner and registered agent of Shirts Without Buttons, LLC, and resides at 8220 River Quarry Pl, Bethesda, Maryland 20817.

FACTS

8. Since at least as early as 1999, Plaintiff Robert G. Lopez has been selling headwear, t-shirts, sweaters, hooded sweatshirts and other clothing items under the LES NYC® and LOWER EAST SIDE™ brand names.

9. Since at least as early as 1999, Plaintiff has been independently operating a clothing business under the trade name L.E.S. CLOTHING CO.™, which has sold headwear, t-shirts, sweaters, hooded sweatshirts and other related clothing items under the marks LOWER EAST SIDE™, LES™ and LES NYC®. Since at least as early as 2010, Plaintiff has also been selling clothing items under the mark LOYALTY EQUALS STRENGTH™ which is a representation of the LES™ brand acronym.

10. In addition to selling and offering for sale clothing items under the LOWER EAST SIDE™, LES™, LES NYC® and LOYALTY EQUALS STRENGTH™ brand names, Plaintiff has also continuously sold and offered for sale various clothing items including t-shirts which bear the LOWER EAST SIDE™ mark in various font and design styles which are prominently displayed on the front and/or back of the headwear, t-shirts and/or sweaters.

11. Plaintiff sells, and promotes the sale of his clothing via his website www.lesclothing.com, through order forms, and his t-shirts and sweaters are also available for sale in several retail locations in New York and other States.

12. Plaintiff advertises his LES CLOTHING CO™, LOWER EAST SIDE™ and LES NYC® brands and clothing items through flyers, posters, stickers and through grass root street marketing methods such as painted “street murals.” Plaintiff also regularly conducts photo shoots of customers who purchase his LOWER EAST SIDE™ and LES NYC® clothing items to be included in magazine advertisements and other marketing materials as well as to be promoted via social media platforms including Facebook® and Instagram®.

13. Plaintiff is the registered owner of United States Trademark Registration No. 4,549,880 for the mark LES NYC®. (See **Exhibit B**).

14. Plaintiff is the registered owner of New York State Trademark Registration No. R31067 for the mark LOWER EAST SIDE™. Plaintiff is also the registered owner of several copyrights for LOWER EAST SIDE™ and LES™ related artwork and designs. (See Exhibit C).

15. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that Defendants have been advertising, marketing, promoting, selling and offering for sale a t-shirt bearing the LOWER EAST SIDE™ mark depicted in the picture below and has been promoting said t-shirt under the title and heading 'Lower East Side' on its website www.crookedmonkey.com. (See Exhibit D).



16. Defendants' use of Plaintiff's LOWER EAST SIDE™ brand in connection with the marketing, promotion and/or sale of clothing has already caused and will continue to cause confusion as to the source or affiliation of the source of the clothing related goods under the LOWER EAST SIDE™ mark.

17. Defendant Micha Weinblatt, as the owner of Defendant Shirts Without Buttons, LLC, has the right and ability to supervise the infringing activity alleged herein, and has a direct financial interest in Defendant Shirts Without Buttons, LLC. Moreover, Defendant Weinblatt has an active participation of the day to day business activities of Shirts Without Buttons, LLC

and is responsible for approving the designs that are exploited on the company's website www.crokkedmonkey.com and as such is jointly and severally liable with Defendant Shirts Without Buttons, LLC.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION
TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT (15 U.S.C. §§ 1114-1116)

18. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained in Paragraphs 1 through 17 of this Complaint.

19. The use in commerce by Defendants of an identical and slightly identical version of Plaintiff's registered trademark is likely to cause confusion, mistake and deception among members of the public and in trade as to the source, origin, or sponsorship of defendants' goods and services. Such use by defendant constitutes a clear and direct infringement of Plaintiff's rights in and to Plaintiff's registered trademark, and has resulted in injury and damage to Plaintiff that will continue if Defendants are not ordered to cease all use of the LOWER EAST SIDE™ and LES NYC® marks.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION
UNFAIR COMPETITION & FALSE DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN (15 U.S.C. § 1125(a))

20. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained in Paragraphs 1 through 19 of this Complaint.

21. Plaintiff has the exclusive right to market, brand and provide clothing related goods using the LES NYC® and LOWER EAST SIDE™ mark in connections with t-shirts and related goods.

22. Defendants by reason of the aforementioned acts, have falsely described, represented and designated the origin of its goods and services. Defendants' activities already have confused the public into believing that Defendants and Plaintiff's clothing goods and

accessories come from one and the same source, and defendants continued activities are likely to create further confusion and deceive the public concerning the source of the goods/services.

23. Defendants have unfairly profited from the actions alleged herein and will continue to unfairly profit and become unjustly enriched unless and until such conduct is enjoined by this Court.

24. By reason of Defendants willful acts conducted in conscious disregard for Plaintiff's rights, Plaintiff is entitled to treble damages under 15 U.S.C. § 1117(a).

**THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION
COMMON LAW TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT & UNFAIR COMPETITION**

25. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained in Paragraphs 1 through 24 of this Complaint.

26. Defendants conduct constitutes deception by which Defendants goods will be palmed off as those of Plaintiff. Such conduct constitutes trademark infringement and unfair competition in violation of the laws of the State of New York.

27. Defendants unauthorized use of Plaintiff's LOWER EAST SIDE™, and LES NYC® marks is likely to continue to cause further confusion to the public as to the clothing goods and accessories of the respective parties.

28. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants have infringed and continue to infringe on Plaintiff's common law rights in the LOWER EAST SIDE™, and LES NYC® marks and Defendants have become unjustly enriched by such acts of infringement.

29. Defendants unlawful conduct has been and will continue to be willful or willfully blind to Plaintiff's rights, as Defendant has reason to know of Plaintiff's rights.

**FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION
UNJUST ENRICHMENT**

30. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained in Paragraphs 1 through 29 of this Complaint.

31. Defendants have unjustly retained profits from the sale of clothing goods and accessories bearing Plaintiff's LOWER EAST SIDE™ and/or LES NYC® marks.

32. Defendants actions constitute unjust enrichment.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully prays for relief as follows:

1. Entry of an order and judgment requiring that all defendant, its subsidiaries, officers, agents, servants, employees, owners, and representatives, and all other persons or entities in active concert or participation with them, be preliminarily and, thereafter, permanently enjoined and restrained from (a) using in any manner the trade name, trademark, domain name or other indicia or origin, including in whole or part the term LOWER EAST SIDE™, LES NYC®, or any colorable imitation thereof; (b) advertising, operating a website, using business stationary or offering any goods or services using the trade name, trademark, domain name, URL, or any other indicia of origin including in whole or part the terms LOWER EAST SIDE™, LES NYC®, or any colorable imitation thereof; (c) otherwise engaging in any acts of unfair competition and infringement which tend to injure Plaintiff's rights in the LES NYC® mark.

2. That Defendant be required to account to Plaintiff for any and all profits derived by it, and to compensate Plaintiff for all the damages sustained by reason of the acts complained of herein, and that the damages herein be trebled pursuant to the Trademark Act.

3. That Defendant be ordered to deliver up for destruction any and all infringing materials bearing the LOWER EAST SIDE™ and LES NYC® marks, and any colorable imitation thereof, in whole or part.

4. That Plaintiff be awarded punitive damages.

5. That Defendant be required to place advertisements or send notifications to past and present customers that it improperly has been using the LOWER EAST SIDE™, and LES NYC® marks.

6. That Plaintiff be awarded the cost and disbursements of this action.

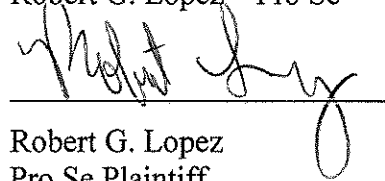
7. That Plaintiff have such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

JURY DEMAND

Pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 38(b), Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury as to all issues.

Dated: June 13, 2016
New York, New York

Respectfully submitted,
Robert G. Lopez – Pro Se

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert G. Lopez", is written over a horizontal line.

Robert G. Lopez
Pro Se Plaintiff
230 Clinton Street – Apt. #11C
New York, New York 10002
(917) 868-1698

EXHIBIT A

Print



Crooked Monkey
www.crookedmonkey.com
240-482-8716

Crooked Monkey

Order#2390

Date Purchased: 2011-01-30 22:19:52

SOLD TO:

65 Jefferson Street
New York, New York 10002
United States

SHIP TO:

New York, New York 10002
United States

Telephone#
917

Email Address:

@yahoo.com

Payment Method: Credit Card : Authorize.net

Products

1 x Lower East Side V neck Guys T-shirt
- Size: X-Large Guys Vneck

Model

Don't forget to submit your photos to fans@crookedmonkey.com for your chance to win more free shirts

EXHIBIT B



United States Patent and Trademark Office

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LES NYC

Word Mark	LES NYC
Goods and Services	IC 025. US 022 039. G & S: Baseball caps and hats; Hooded sweatshirts; Short-sleeved or long-sleeved t-shirts; T-shirts. FIRST USE: 19991200. FIRST USE IN COMMERCE: 19991200
Standard Characters Claimed	
Mark Drawing Code	(4) STANDARD CHARACTER MARK
Serial Number	85335314
Filing Date	June 1, 2011
Current Basis	1A
Original Filing Basis	1A
Published for Opposition	April 1, 2014
Registration Number	4549880
Registration Date	June 17, 2014
Owner	(REGISTRANT) Lopez, Robert G. INDIVIDUAL UNITED STATES 230 Clinton Street - Apt. #11C New York NEW YORK 10002
Type of Mark	TRADEMARK
Register	PRINCIPAL-2(F)
Live/Dead Indicator	LIVE

EXHIBIT C

New York State Department of State Certificate of Trademark Registration

I Daniel E. Shapiro, Special Deputy Secretary of State, do certify that the Trademark described below and depicted on the attached copy has been duly registered in this Department pursuant to Article 24 of the General Business Law. This registration will remain in force for TEN years from the Date of Registration.

Registration Number: R31067 **Registration Date:** 06/06/07

Applicant: ROBERT G. LOPEZ
230 CLINTON STREET APT. #11C
NEW YORK NY 10002-

**State of Incorporation or
Partnership Organization:**

Class Numbers: 25

Date First Used in NYS: 12/1999 **Date First Used Anywhere** 12/1999

Trademark Description:
LOWER EAST SIDE

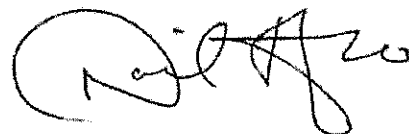
The mark is comprised of the words "Lower East Side" In stylized letters with an underline and overline.

Description of Goods: Clothing, namely, T-shirts, Hooded Sweatshirts, Vest, Hats and Caps as adopted from the USPTO.

WITNESS my hand and the seal of the State of New York In
the City of Albany on this:

Thursday, August 16, 2007

by:



Special Deputy Secretary of State

DOS-690 (Rev. 3/01)



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Copyright Catalog (1978 to present)

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Labeled View

LOWER EAST SIDE MURAL.

Type of Work: Visual Material

Registration Number / Date: VA0001753473 / 2010-12-16

Application Title: LOWER EAST SIDE MURAL.

Title: LOWER EAST SIDE MURAL.

Description: Electronic file (eService)

Copyright Claimant: Robert G. Lopez, 1976- . Address: 230 Clinton Street #11C, New York, NY 10002, United States.

Date of Creation: 2007

Date of Publication: 2007-09-25

Nation of First Publication: United States

Authorship on Application: Robert G. Lopez, 1976- ; Domicile: United States; Citizenship: United States.
Authorship: photograph(s)

Names: Lopez, Robert G., 1976-



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Labeled View

LES LIFE Design.

Type of Work: Visual Material

Registration Number / Date: VA0001872703 / 2013-05-07

Application Title: LES LIFE Design.

Title: LES LIFE Design.

Description: Electronic file (eService)

Copyright Claimant: Robert G Lopez, 1976- . Address: 230 Clinton Street - Apt. 11C, New York, NY, 10002, United States.

Date of Creation: 2013

Date of Publication: 2013-02-01

Nation of First Publication: United States

Authorship on Application: Robert G Lopez, 1976- ; Domicile: United States; Citizenship: United States.
Authorship: photograph(s)

Names: Lopez, Robert G, 1976-



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LEFS Design.

Type of Work: Visual Material

Registration Number / Date: VA0001807134 / 2012-02-13

Application Title: LEFS Design.

Title: LEFS Design.

Description: Electronic file (eService)

Copyright Claimant: Robert G. Lopez. Address: 230 Clinton Street, Apt. 11C, New York, NY, United States.

Date of Creation: 2010

Date of Publication: 2010-10-10

Nation of First Publication: United States

Authorship on Application: Robert G. Lopez; Domicile: United States; Citizenship: United States. Authorship: photograph(s)

Names: Lopez, Robert G.



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LOYALTY EQUALS STRENGTH.

Type of Work: Visual Material

Registration Number / Date: VA0001788619 / 2011-08-29

Application Title: LOYALTY EQUALS STRENGTH.

Title: LOYALTY EQUALS STRENGTH.

Description: Electronic file (eService)

Copyright Claimant: Robert G. Lopez, 1976- . Address: 230 Clinton Street, #11C, New York, NY, 10002.

Date of Creation: 2011

Date of Publication: 2011-07-11

Nation of First Publication: United States

Authorship on Application: Robert G. Lopez, 1976- ; Domicile: United States; Citizenship: United States.
Authorship: photograph(s)

Names: Lopez, Robert G., 1976-



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Men's T-shirt

\$24.00

Availability: Out of stock



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